

KERAMIC STUDIO

Vol. XXIV, No. 6

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

November, 1922



IN AN interesting article by John Cotton Dana, in a recent issue of the Nation, Mr. Dana has taken exception to Museum propaganda and his points are more or less just. We are wondering though whether a fit of ill humor may not have obscured his vision a bit. He begins: "Our Art Museums do not teach us to recognize good art and to like it—they do not help to improve design of our manufactured products—they do not encourage such of our people who are born with talent for the graphic arts to give their lives to training that talent."

That is a pretty strong statement.

Personally, having been a craftswoman for over thirty years, Museums, and especially the Metropolitan and Boston Museums, have been to me sources of great inspiration. Much of the art education of craftsmen is gathered from such sources and that is how we learn to recognize good art and to like it. The juries of foreign and domestic Expositions are setting the seal of approval on our work, and, as much of our ambition to do beautiful work is stimulated by seeing the beautiful things which have been done before, it seems that the whole of Mr. Dana's opening paragraph is somewhat disproved.

What "got Mr. Dana's goat," to use a slang phrase, was the statement by one of the Museum officials "that *only* in the objects of an Art Museum like the Metropolitan can be found designs which will cause our manufacturers to produce applied art objects that are veritably in the fine art field."

We agree with Mr. Dana in objecting to the claim "that no design is good unless based upon study of good *old* designs, and that they alone will lead to the making of good *new* ones and can be found almost solely in Museums." But when he claims that the improvement in design of our manufacturers is simply a case of "making the punishment fit the crime," i. e., making the supply equal the demand, he forgets that the public, among other ways of learning to recognize and like and demand artistic things, is visiting the Museums and consciously or unconsciously acquiring better taste in design.

One goes to Museums to put one's mind through the exercise by which one consciously or unconsciously acquires color notes, combinations of line, movement, mass, suggestions of motifs or of methods of treating other motifs, etc., as the musician practices scales and exercises in acquiring the technique of his art. This the general public is acquiring at the same time as the designer, but as it has not the skill or desire to transmute this knowledge into visible expression, it is transmuted into taste which demands of the designer the qualities the public has learned to love.

After all, what are these beautiful objects in Museums but the expression by craftsmen and artists of past ages of the same truths of harmony and rhythm and contrast, etc., which *their* contemporaries also were drawing from the bosom of the infinite but could not express for lack of skill with their hands or brains. All these beautiful images lie in the one great and infinite mind. They are ours to take at will. We do not take them because we are concentrating along different lines and draw different thoughts from the infinite source. But they belong

equally to each of us, and, by studying their expression by ancient craftsmen, in Museums or elsewhere, our souls are stimulated to open a channel along which these inspirations may flow ever more fully into our consciousness. It is thus that the demand for more beautiful expression is created, and thus that the designer is stimulated to create and the manufacturer forced to seek the designer to complete the circle. "This is the House that Jack built. This is the malt that lay in the House that Jack built, etc."

But what reaches our hearts most of all is Mr. Dana's protest against the assumption that "the only real, true and holy art is found in the objects gathered by Museums," and that "copying and adapting of designs found in their objects" is the only stimulus leading to improvement in applied art products.

"Copying and adapting" is one step, and a helpful one, for those who, yearning for the beautiful, cannot afford or find good fundamental art instruction. But the thing one really goes to the Museums to acquire, consciously or unconsciously, is not the designs and motifs themselves, but the great underlying principles of good design. This is of course acquired more rapidly if acquired consciously, under instruction. Object lessons are of prime importance to the undeveloped mind, and few minds are so little developed that they cannot respond in a degree to the stimulus of the art expressions of those that have "gone before."

Mr. Dana asks "What is the chief factor in the formation of the taste of the buying public?" His answer is: "fashion, convention, what 'they say' of course." But he fails to go to the root of the matter. He should have asked: "What makes fashion, convention, what 'they say'?" There are several answers to that, but chief among them is the fact of the growing understanding of a people that has wandered far afield from the divine source of inspiration and is being gathered back into the fold by the shepherds of "the real, the true, the beautiful," and these shepherds—or teachers,—however they may be lacking in full understanding, however poorly they may know how to display the treasures of the fold, however mistaken they be themselves in minor matters, are indeed leading our people out of Egyptian Darkness—and the Museums are notable torches illuminating that darkness, even though Mr. Dana says that the influence of the study of rare and costly objects in Art Museums is so slight as to be *entirely* negligible.

Doubtless the greater portion of the buying public does not get its taste first hand. As Mr. Dana says: "Movies, advertisements, magazines, travel, shop windows, daily conversation, etc., all have their influence." But the buying public of tomorrow will have the added art training of public and art schools, and that training owes a more or less heavy debt to the Museums.

One more quotation from Mr. Dana's article has our complete sympathy. He says: "As a Nation we ignore our own artistic powers, not entirely but greatly. In the field of artistry, in the matter of giving our designers and craftsmen a fair chance, the resulting evil is serious in the extreme. It betokens a sad state of mind, which the Museum that devotes its collecting powers almost solely to things produced in other lands, and to products of native talent not at all, does its utmost to make permanent and universal."

That is very true. However, cheer up. A sum of ten thousand dollars, to be repeated in four years, has been donated to the Metropolitan Museum for the purchase of craftwork by native artists, and a circulating exhibit by the Federation of Arts of representative work of over one hundred of our best craftworkers is going the rounds of the Museums this winter in the hope and anticipation of purchases from the exhibit by the Museums. This is at least an encouraging sign.

Adelaide A. Robineau

Do not forget our design competition closing December 1st. Subject animal motifs. See back cover for particulars.

STUDIO NOTE

Mrs. Blanche Van Court Boudinot, who was well known of china decorators when she had a studio in Chicago under the name of Blanche Van Court Schneider, has opened a new studio in Hinsdale, Ill.



ADAPTATION OF BOWL DESIGN (Supplement) TO PLATE—JETTA EHLERS

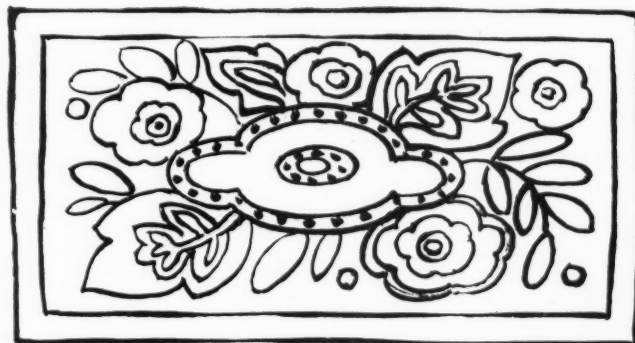
SALAD BOWL (Supplement)

Jetta Ehlers

Largest flower, Rhodian Red, Flower (lower right), outline, Ming Blue. Solid part, Mauvine. Center, Rhodian Red. Dot in center, Yellow. Upper right, Ming Blue. Center, Rhodian Red. Dot in center, Yellow. Two small ones, upper right, Dull Yellow. Dot, Mauvine. Lower, Mauvine. Dot, Rhodian Red. Leaves, New Green. Veinings, Old Chinese Blue. Small leaves and dots, Old Chinese Blue.



Adaptation of Bowl Design (Supplement) to Round Box—Jetta Ehlers



Adaptation of Bowl Design (Supplement) to Covered Box—Jetta Ehlers



FLORENCE HEDDEN

DESIGNING CATALOGUE COVERS

Ida Wells Stroud

AMONG the many things that may be improved by the type of design used upon them are pamphlet and catalogue covers including school magazines, papers and programs. In planning one, the first thing to be thought of is proportion and size. "A thing of beauty" is seldom produced when cost is the first thought. So it is well not to hold to the idea of getting it out at the lowest possible price. Beautiful proportions may cost a trifle more, because the paper does not always cut to the same advantage, but it is worth while to spend the difference.

Having decided upon a well-proportioned rectangle for the cover, the next step is to divide this artistically. Just how much space is to be given to the name or wording and what amount is to be left for the decoration, or the "picture" part? Then consideration must be given to name and subject. Plan it all out in black, white and grey first, to secure a beautiful distribution of dark and light over the surface and to be able to watch the balance and movement of shapes and spaces. Try to avoid having the movement from corner to corner and hold your centre of interest a little above the middle of the whole space. Of course the division should not be an even one, and much has been said as to whether the wording or the picture part is more important but so much depends upon just what there is to say and what the subject is, that this matter must be decided for each problem. In the Tree catalogue covers here illustrated, you will notice that the actual space given to the decoration is larger than the lettering, but the words are so distinct that they

hold their own and speak as loudly, if not more so, than the decoration or "picture."

A catalogue is gotten out by a firm to aid in advertising and selling goods, so unless it delivers its message clearly and in an attractive way, it fails to fulfil its mission. Plain, large and well proportioned letters are the best for this purpose, and how much more attractive are the simple decorative arrangements of trees and flowers, than would be a conglomeration of many small literal renderings of the things. The detail that is put into exact representations means smaller spottings and the various tones put in each take something away from the bigness and carrying power of the decoration; hence the realistic pictures are not as suitable as the decorative and conventional ones. The design on the cover is not necessarily one of the trees listed within. It is intended to speak to you of unusual trees, or to be a symbol of the kind you would like to have growing in your garden.

The Seed Catalogue covers are also conventional and make bright patches of color, speaking of growth and cheerfulness more than of any particular kind of a flower.

Colors on all these should be bright and happy, those having much power of attraction, at the same time being harmonious and pleasing to the general public.

Believe in the intelligence of your public and its ability to know the choice thing from the poor one. People seldom know why they like a thing but yearly many are coming into an appreciation of the finer and better qualities, and they do know what they like. As art instructors we can do our part to cultivate the

(Continued on page 108)





A. BASKER



G. A. BRISTOW



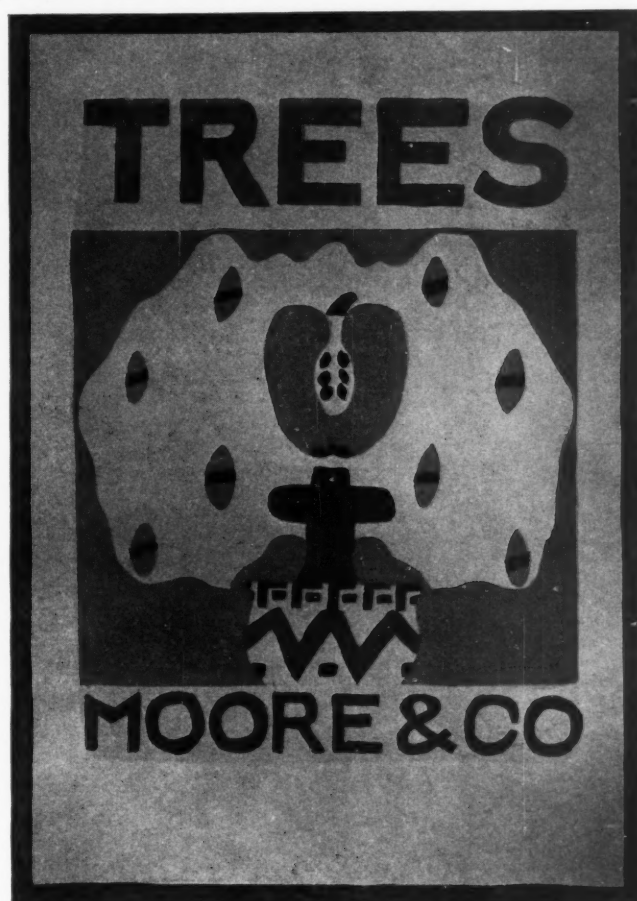
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H. HAUPT



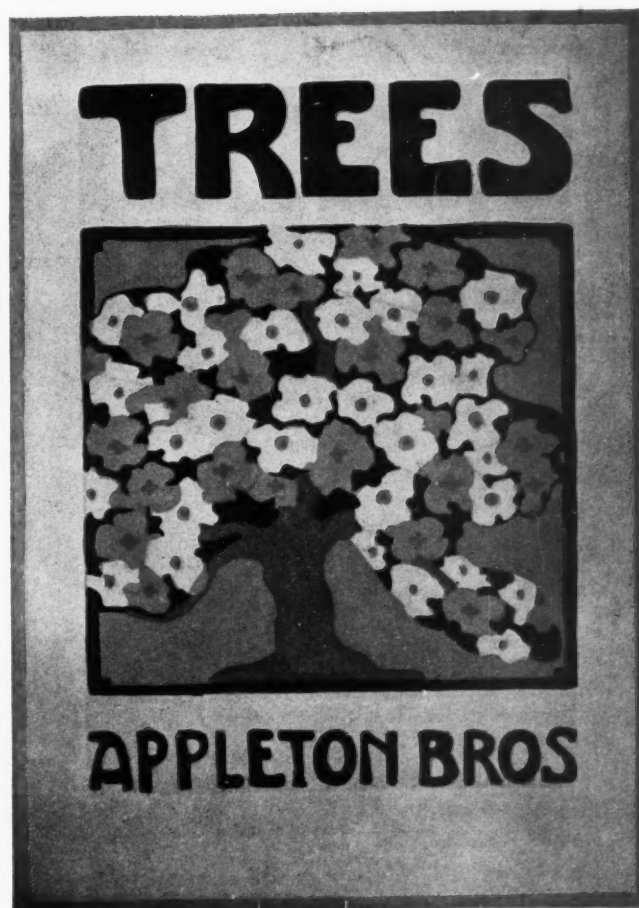
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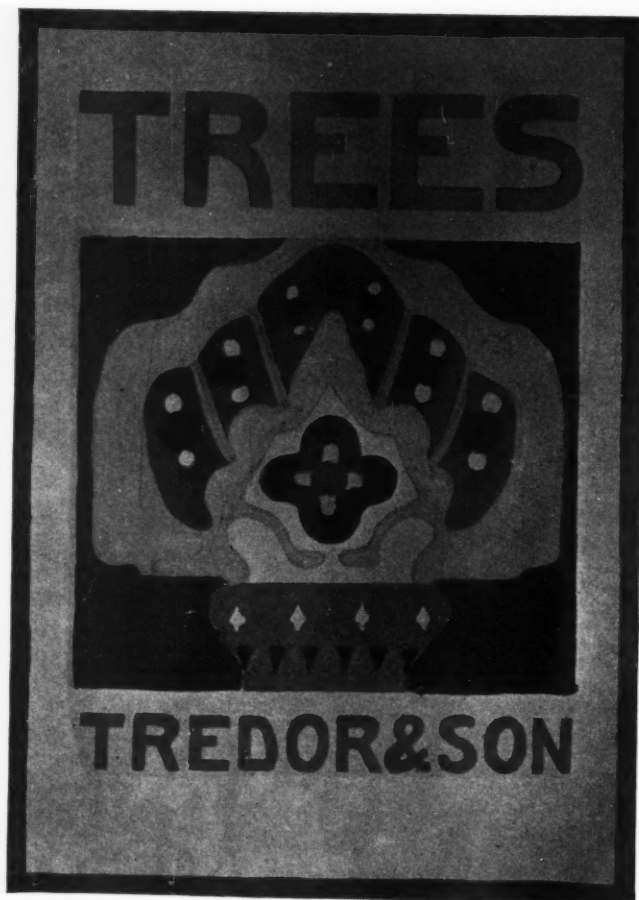
WM. SHARPE



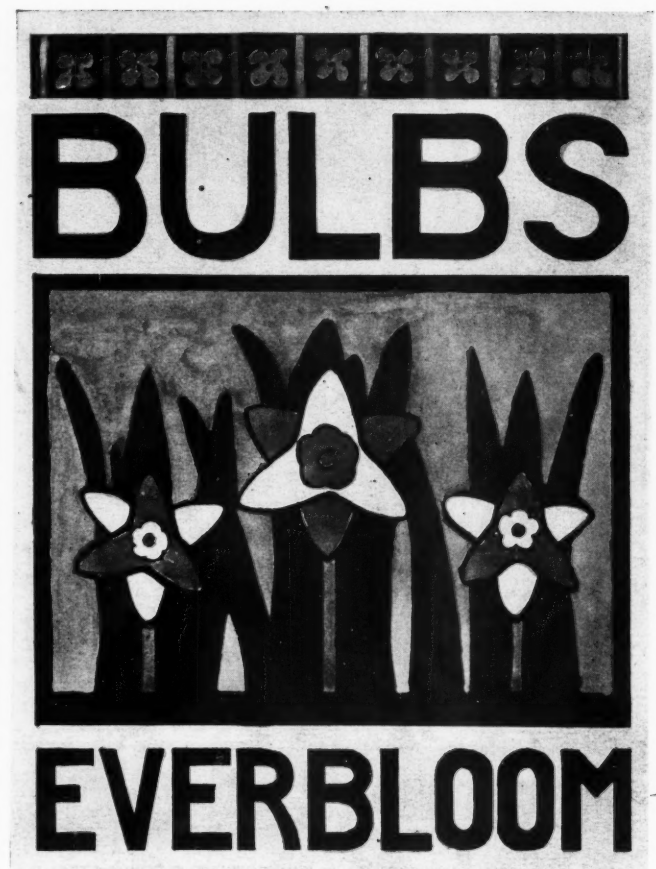
MABEL VAN D. CAMPBELL



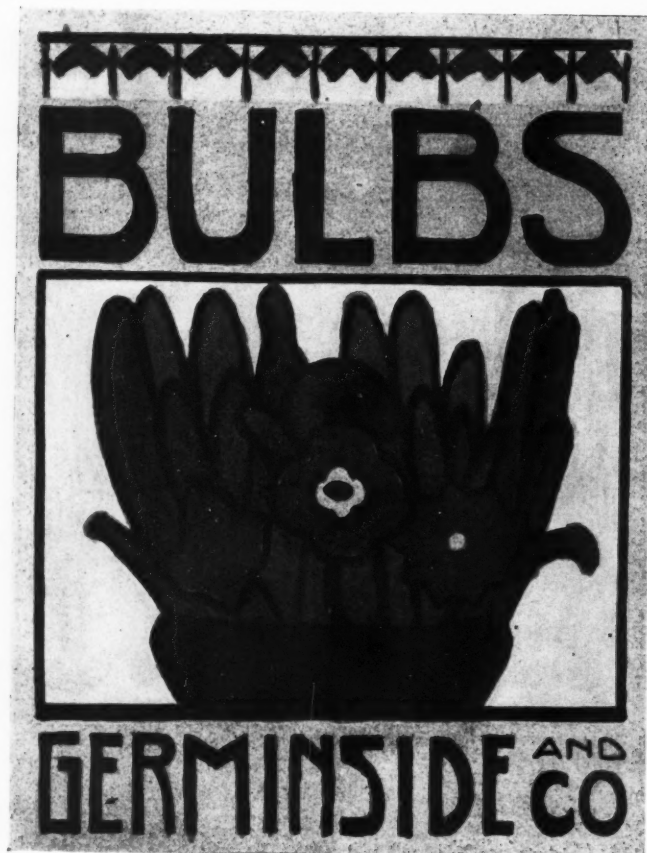
A. A. BIAL



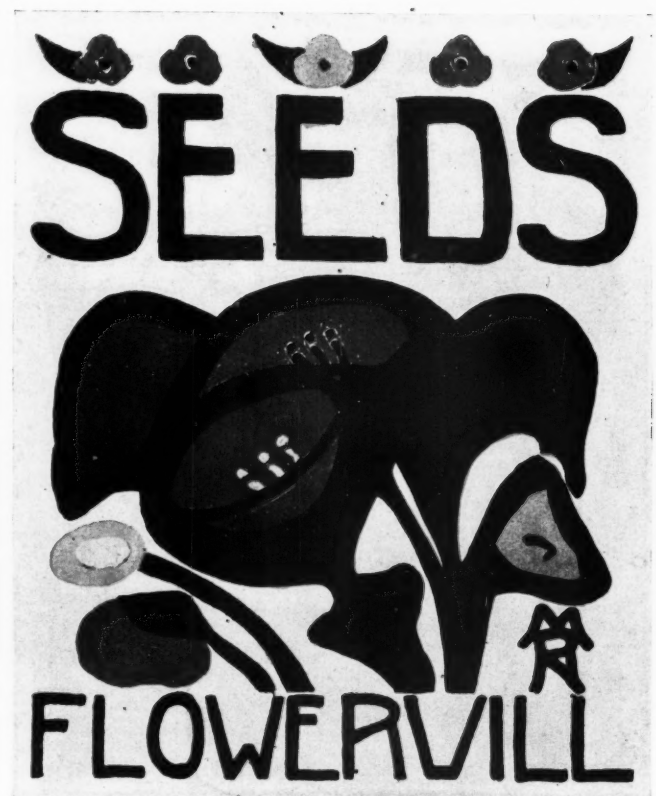
KENNETH S. HOFFMAN



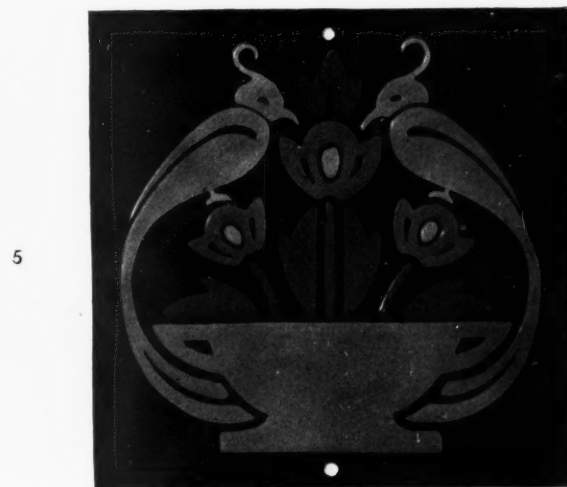
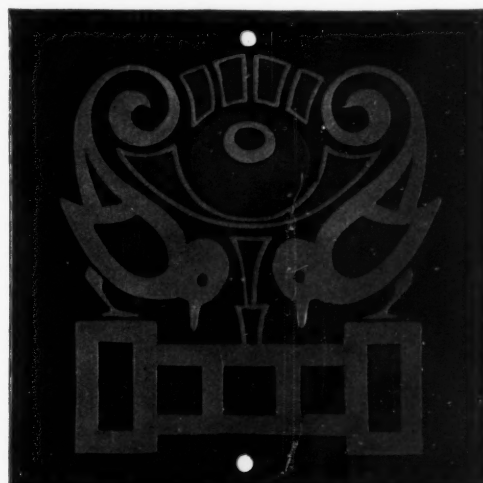
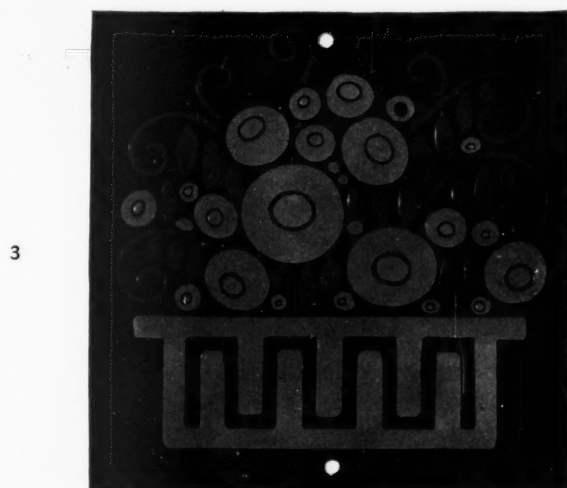
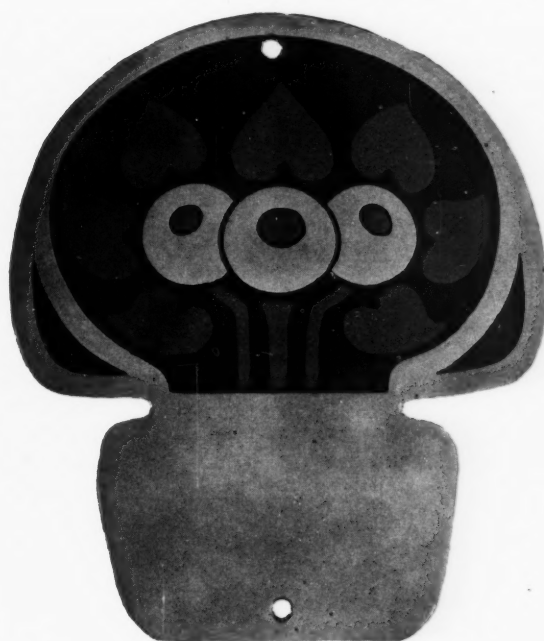
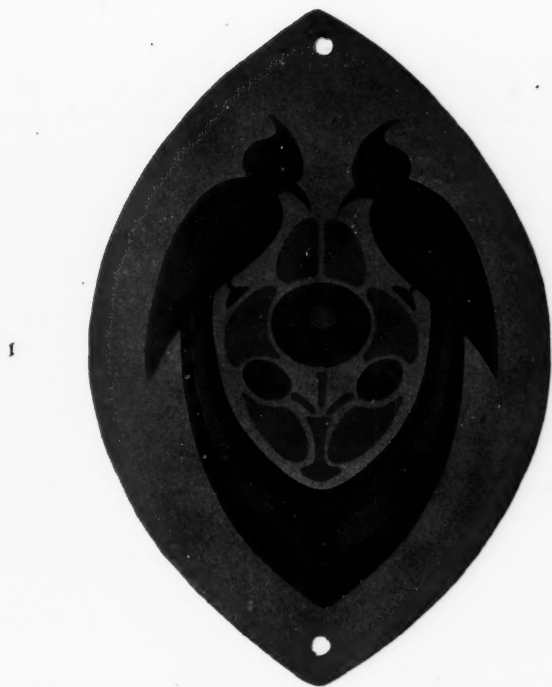
A. BARKER



KENNETH S. HOFFMAN



ETHEL M. STEADMAN



MOTIFS FOR CHINA DECORATION OR UNFIRED DECORATION ON TIN—JUANITA MEREDITH
(Treatments page 108)

(Continued from page 103)

taste of the young people who come to us for help, as they are the men and women of tomorrow. The manufacturers, buyers and heads of departments all influence the market and consequently the kind of things sold, much more than the individual buyers, for one can purchase only what first finds its way to the shops. Manufacturers put out what they think will sell and advertise it in what they consider an attractive way. So, eventually, we can have more artistic things in our homes by beginning with the future men and women.

MOTIFS FOR CHINA DECORATION (page 117)

Juanita Meredith

No. 1—Grey ground, darkest tone Blue; birds Grey and rings in flowers Red Violet. Flowers, Lilac; leaves, Jade Green.

No. 2—Flower pot and handles, Jade Green; background,

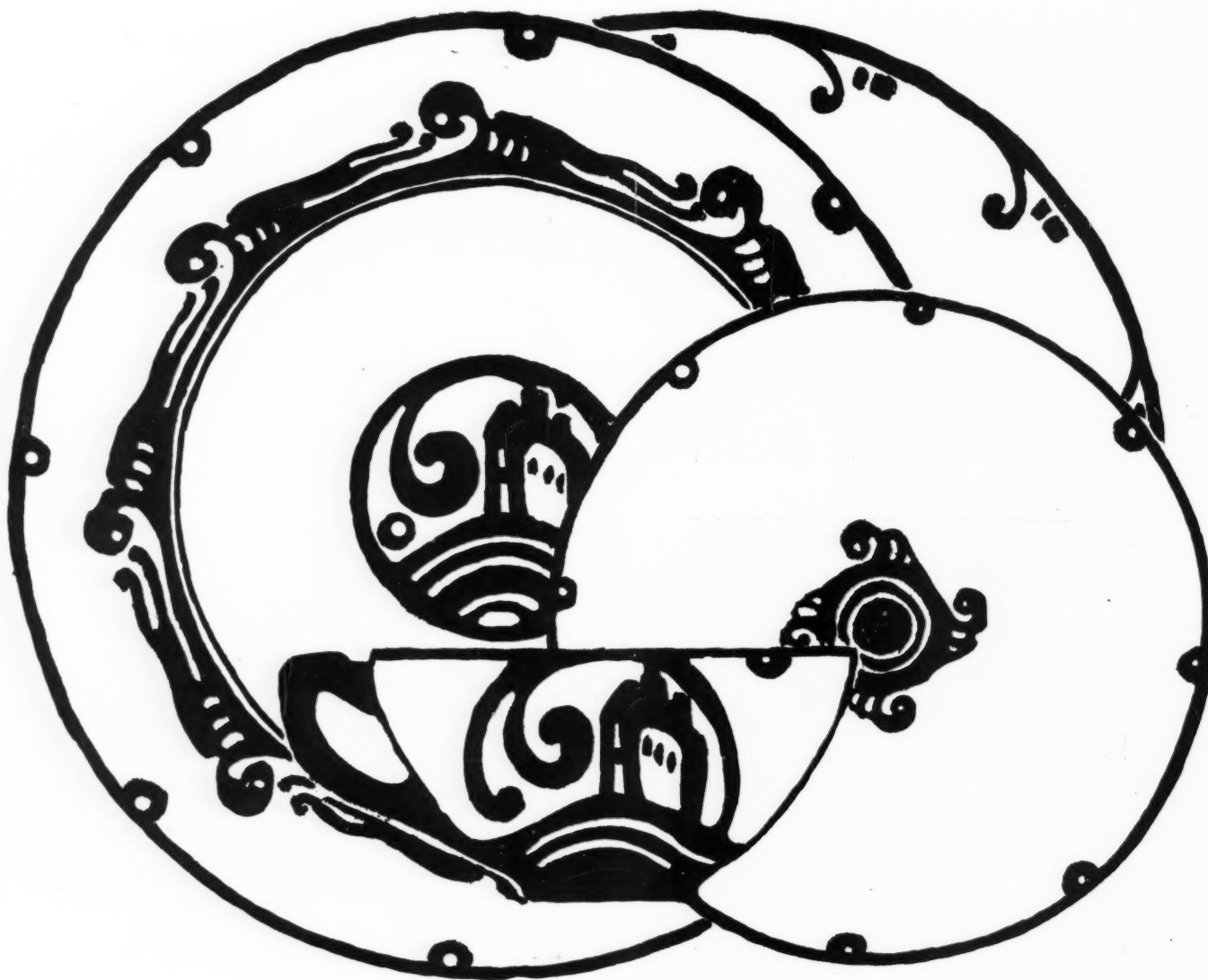
Dark Blue. Leaves and stems, light Yellow Green. Flowers, light Yellow, centers Deep Orange.

No. 3—Ground, Black; basket, Gold. Round flowers in different shades of red, from Scarlet to Red Violet. Centers, different shades of yellow, from light yellow to deep orange. Stems and leaves, Jade Green, smallest flowers Lilac.

No. 4—Ground, Violet; flower box, light Yellow Jade; light lines around leaves same. Leaves, light Peacock Green. Flowers, Lilac with light Citron circle and Red Orange center. Birds, light Citron with Lilac wings.

No. 5—Ground, Gold; birds, light Turquoise Blue. Flower pot, Silver. Leaves and stems, light Jade Green. Flowers, Lilac with light Turquoise Green spots.

No. 6—Ground, bright Green. Birds, bright Blue with Lilac wings, head and tail spots. Flower pot, Lilac with light green band and spots. Flowers, Pink Lavender with light corn color centers. Stems and three spots Amethyst; leaves Grey



LUNCH SET IN GOLD, SILVER OR BRONZE ON SEDJI ADAPTED FROM WOOD BLOCK BY CARLTON ATHERTON

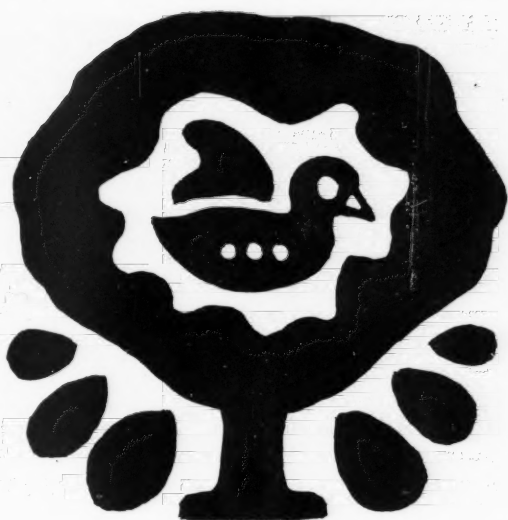


Fig. 1 WOOD BLOCK DESIGN, A BIRD IN A TREE—RUTH JOHNSON

WOOD-BLOCK DECORATION FOR SUMMER DRESSES, APRONS AND COVERS

Ruth Johnson

IN this day of cotton materials, when almost anything can be made of unbleached muslin, if attractively designed; and when gingham, cretonne and calico are used in unexpected and charming ways, it might be well for us to use our ingenuity and the simple tools at hand to take advantage of this mode. And it is only natural that we should turn to block-printing as a simple and appropriate means of adding to and enriching this plain cotton material. One would not think of using silk embroidery or lace with unbleached muslin. It would be a discord of textures, and would be just as offensive as a discord in colors. The simplicity and directness of pattern and color which can be obtained by using a block is in perfect harmony with the cheaper, plain materials. Those which resemble the old home-spuns of earlier times, such as loosely woven linens, all qualities of unbleached muslin, and certain rough pongees, as well as other plain pieces in color, will make ideal foundations for original hand-blocked patterns.

There is a fine quality of muslin at twelve cents per yard which can be used as dress material, luncheon-cloths and napkins, table covers, hangings, or bed-spreads; and is so inexpensive that it can also be used as the drawing paper, and for all of the experimenting. By using it in this way all timidity which might interfere on the final piece is done away with, and a professional appearance is quickly obtained.

For these rougher fabrics a design cut to resemble the peasant embroideries and applied to garments designed from the peasant blouses would be most attractive. Another very fine effect in wood-block design is the abstract or symbolical brush-drawing. These can be worked out on bogus paper in charcoal or ink for the first black-and-white effect, and then transferred to the block for the printed repeat. By experimenting with the different possible positions for the repeat, or by alternating the color, the finest arrangement or combination can be found.

After the blocks have been cut and their design worked out as an all-over pattern, the piece itself is designed as to position and amount of decoration it is to have. If it is to be a dress, the parts for the block-printing are cut out or marked, and the pieces printed in relation to the neck-line, hem, sleeve and belt. For the most pleasing results one should visualize the finished garment or textile before starting, and should hold as closely

as possible to that desired effect. However, one should experiment and remain open to any changes suggested by accidents which might appear in the design or construction of the piece.

Almost without exception a design made first with the brush, in one color, will be practical for cutting with the knife. It will be strong and have large well shaped spaces and easy-flowing curves.

The subject for the design may be some simple symbolical form, which would suggest the use or association of the piece, or it may be entirely abstract. For silk patterns, such as the two-color foulards which are designed very much on the same way as the block-print, the abstract and more flowing pattern with no up-and-down form is more suitable.

In the accompanying illustrations there are three patterns which were worked out in repeats for Textile Designs, and which show the similarity to the block-print patterns. The one, a "Group of Houses," with the roadway and smoke was the most successful, in navy blue and grey, for a dress silk. The block-print of similar idea in Fig. 5 by Rhoda Robbins was worked out on grey linen in jade green for the steps, door and windows, and in blue-violet for the vine, with spots of vermillion and yellow green for the flowers. The "Bird in the Tree" Fig. 1 was in black on red; the all over pattern Fig. 4 by Helene Smith was in orange on the unbleached muslin, making a one color effect. The "Flower Pot," Fig. 6 by Myrna Ballantyne was done on pongee in a warm brown with orange centers for the flowers.

The centers of flowers and other secondary spots can be put on with small sticks or brush handles in another color. The block itself is in one color only as it is printed from a color pad with one direct pressure from the pad to the material. The oil-paint is used rather thinly through this pad and is pressed into the texture of the material. A little acetic acid is sometimes added to make the paint more fast for washing. Dyes may be used by thickening them to the consistency of oil paint with gum arabic, but it is difficult to find a dye which will be fast in such a small quantity. The block is of gum-wood or of heavy linoleum which has been mounted on ordinary wood. By experimenting, the proper thickness of the pad under the material, the consistency of the paint, the smoothness of the block and the quality of the material can be tested and any difficulties remedied.

A good trial piece for block-printing would be a kitchen apron of unbleached muslin or some slip-covers for the porch chairs; also a cover for the card table. At any rate it could not hurt the cloth, and the reverse side would still be good if anything happened to the right side.



Fig. 2 Design for Silk, The Ocean Liner—Carlton Atherton



Block Printed Dress—Ruth Page



Fig. 3—Design for Silk, Summer Cottage—Helene Smith

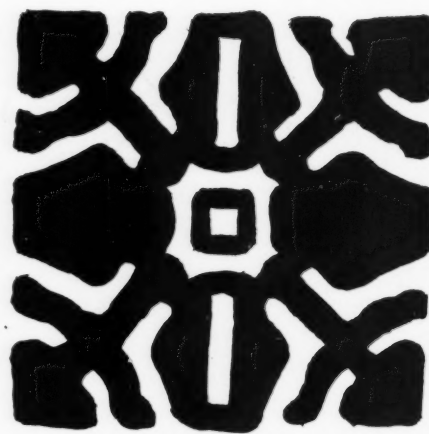


Fig. 4—Wood Block Design for Dress in All Over Pattern—Helene Smith



Block Printed Dress— Helene Smith



Block Printed Dress—Rhoda Robbins

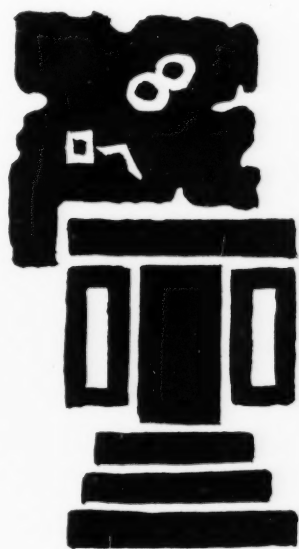


Fig. 5—Wood Block Design for Dress, a Doorway with Climbing Vines—
Rhoda Robbins

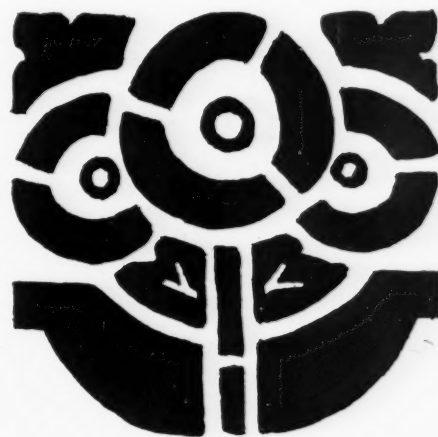


Fig. 6—Wood Block Design for Dress, Pot of Flowers—Myrna Ballantine



Block Printed Dress—Myrna Ballantine



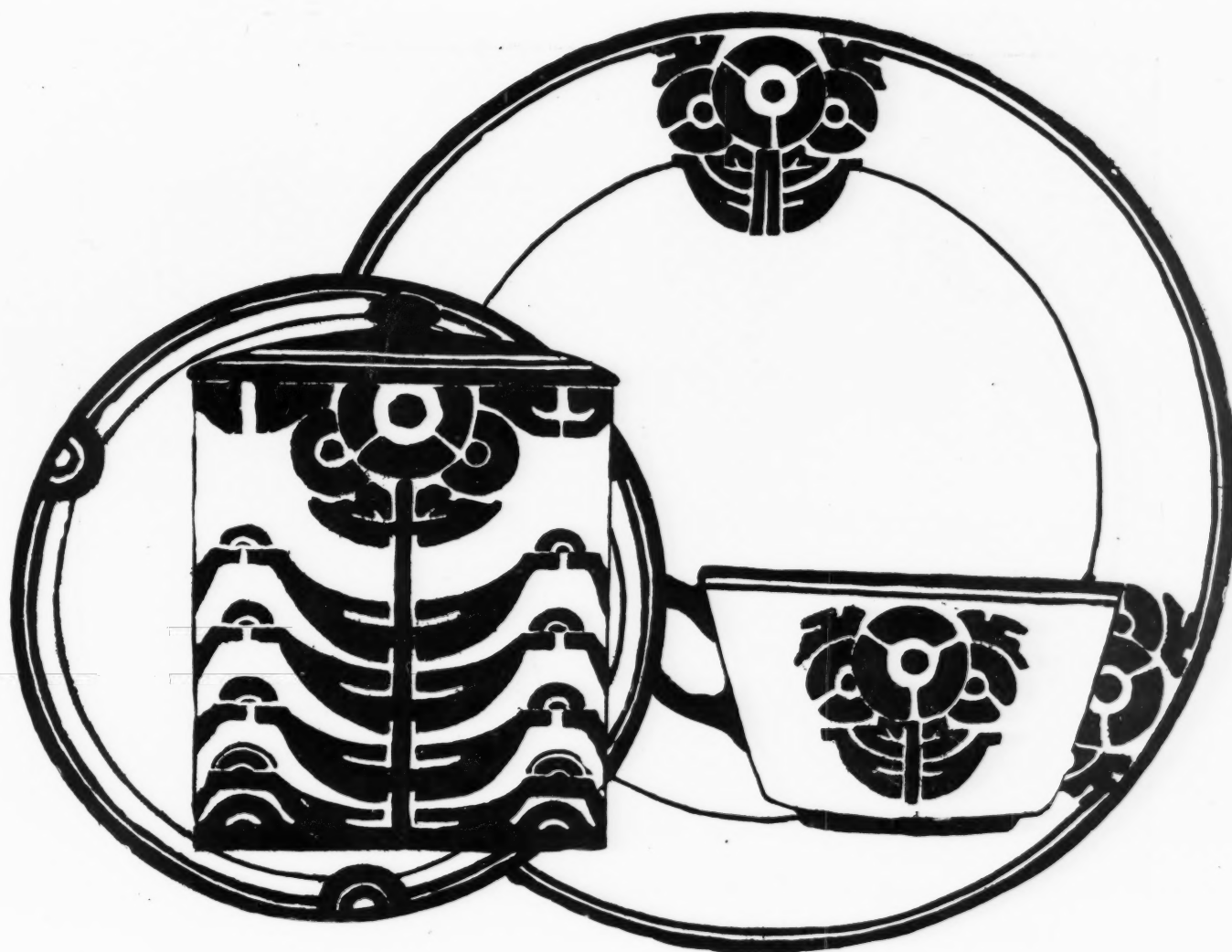
Block Printed Dress—Ruth Sidney



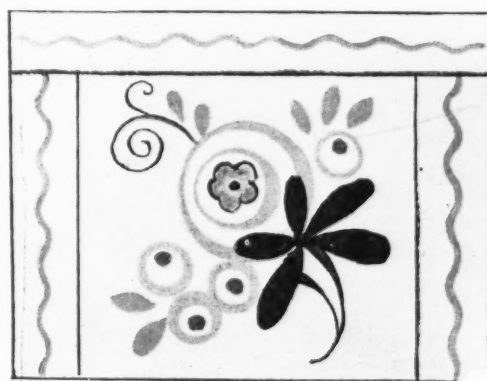
Block Printed Apron—Abbie Harper



Design for Dress Silk, Group of Houses—Mabel Decker



LUNCH SET IN ENAMELS ADAPTED FROM WOOD BLOCK BY MYRNA BALLANTINE



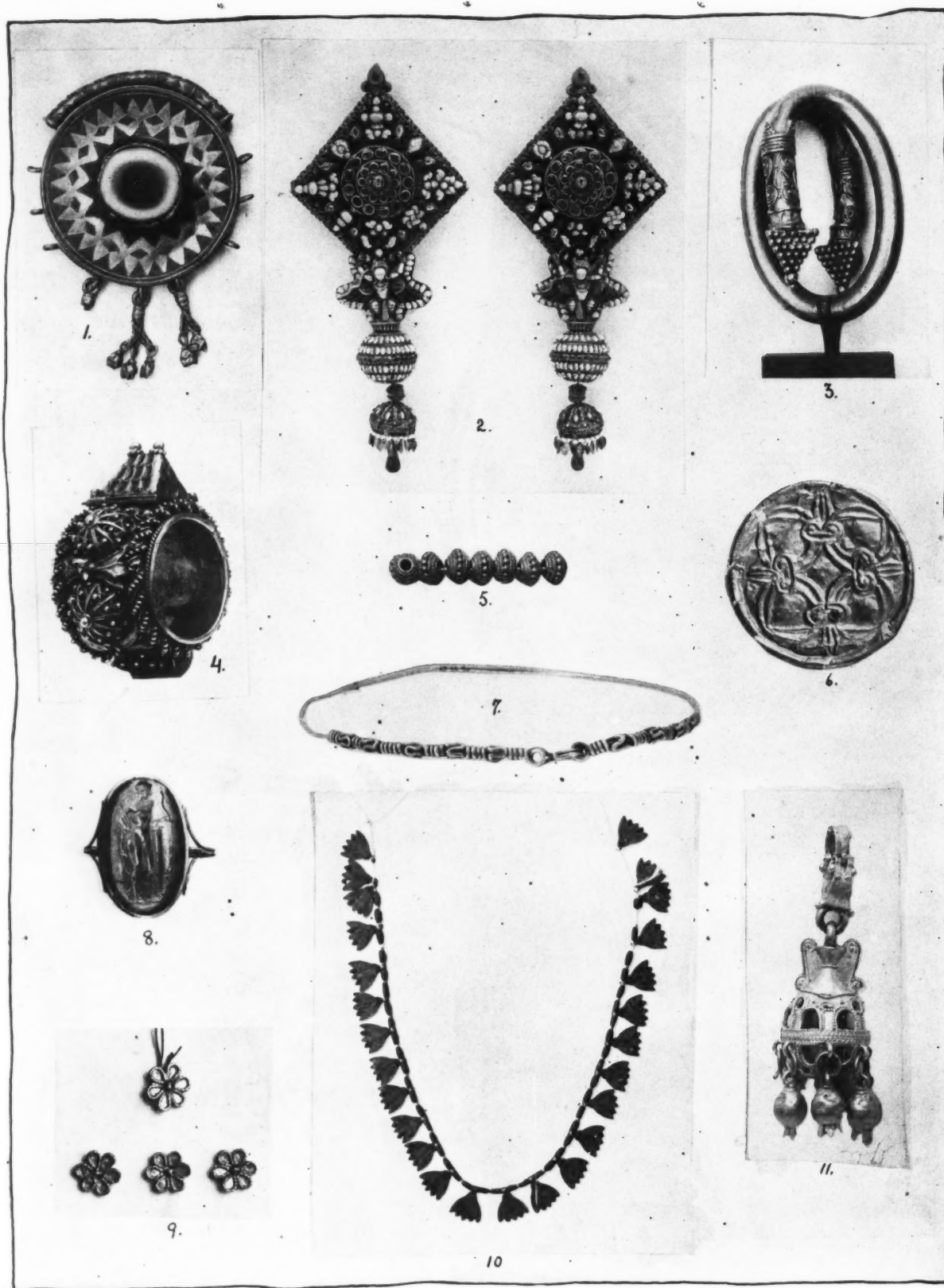
MOTIFS—MRS. ROBERT D. HAIRE

Bird motif for Cup and Saucer—Darkest tone Scarlet, medium grey tone azure Blue. Light grey tone Leaf Green. Flower, Citron; scrolls and eyes Lilac.

Design for Box—Darkest tone, Amethyst. Medium grey tone, Egyptian Blue. Light grey tone, Wistaria. Leaves,

Leaf Green; lines Leaf Green and Wistaria.

Salt in enamels—Darkest tone, Yale Blue. Leaves, Celtic Green and Peacock Green with markings in Yale Blue. Flower, Wistaria and Lilac, lines of same.



JEWELRY—Courtesy of Metropolitan Museum

No. 1—Cypriote No. 2—Thibetan, 17th-19th century No. 3—Greek, 5th-6th century, B. C. No. 4—Venetian, 16th century No. 5—Graeco-Roman, 1st century, A. D. No. 6—Greek No. 8—Appollo Pytheas No. 10—Egyptian No. 11—Graeco Roman



BRONZE BUCKLE—FINLAND, late Iron Age
Courtesy of Museum of Natural History

JEWELRY (Concluded)—JOHN P. HEINS

There are people who knowingly wear ugly jewelry, because dear friends or relatives were the well-meaning givers. This in its final analysis is a form of hypocrisy. People ought to carefully select things that are fitting for, and will be held in esteem by the recipient. If purchasers of jewelry were more cautious about their selections, and more insistent in demanding things that are good in design from commercial jewelers, gifts would have more significance, and would not be worn only when giver and receiver are to meet. Sentiment can enter into arts, so long as it does not interfere with art qualities which should not be sacrificed at any cost. To set an ugly cameo, because a deceased grandsire loved it, purchased it from a descendant of Napoleon, and bequeathed it to the inheritor, is the leanest of excuses for its being utilized. If presents are however fine in art quality, then there cannot be any serious objection to sentiment.

Our jewelry without exact limitation, causes attraction, is scintillating, is often quite intricate, is generally good in workmanship, likewise at times is extremely exorbitant in price, and is usually inartistic. If a piece of jewelry is made of platinum or of white gold, and precious gems in Tiffany settings, the retail salesman will have little difficulty in disposing of it. How many persons can distinguish between silver, white gold, platinum, German silver, tin, and nickel? The majority admit they know the difference. How cold and like steel is most of the platinum and diamond combinations created by the highly specialized jewelry workers of to-day. A small quantity of jewelry is designed and executed to completion by one man in factories. Many of the causes for the existence of the hideous jewelry made in this century, are traceable to this method of production.

It is of weighty interest to compare the creations of single craftsmen, with the works turned out by machines and many men who are part of the mechanisms. Yet in comparing the best commercial jewelry with that of the Romans, Etruscans, and Egyptians, one particularly realizes that the superb design of the ancient gold work has not been surpassed, rarely equalled; while in craftsmanship these Peoples have achieved results that still bewilder the most expert jewelers. Detailed design can

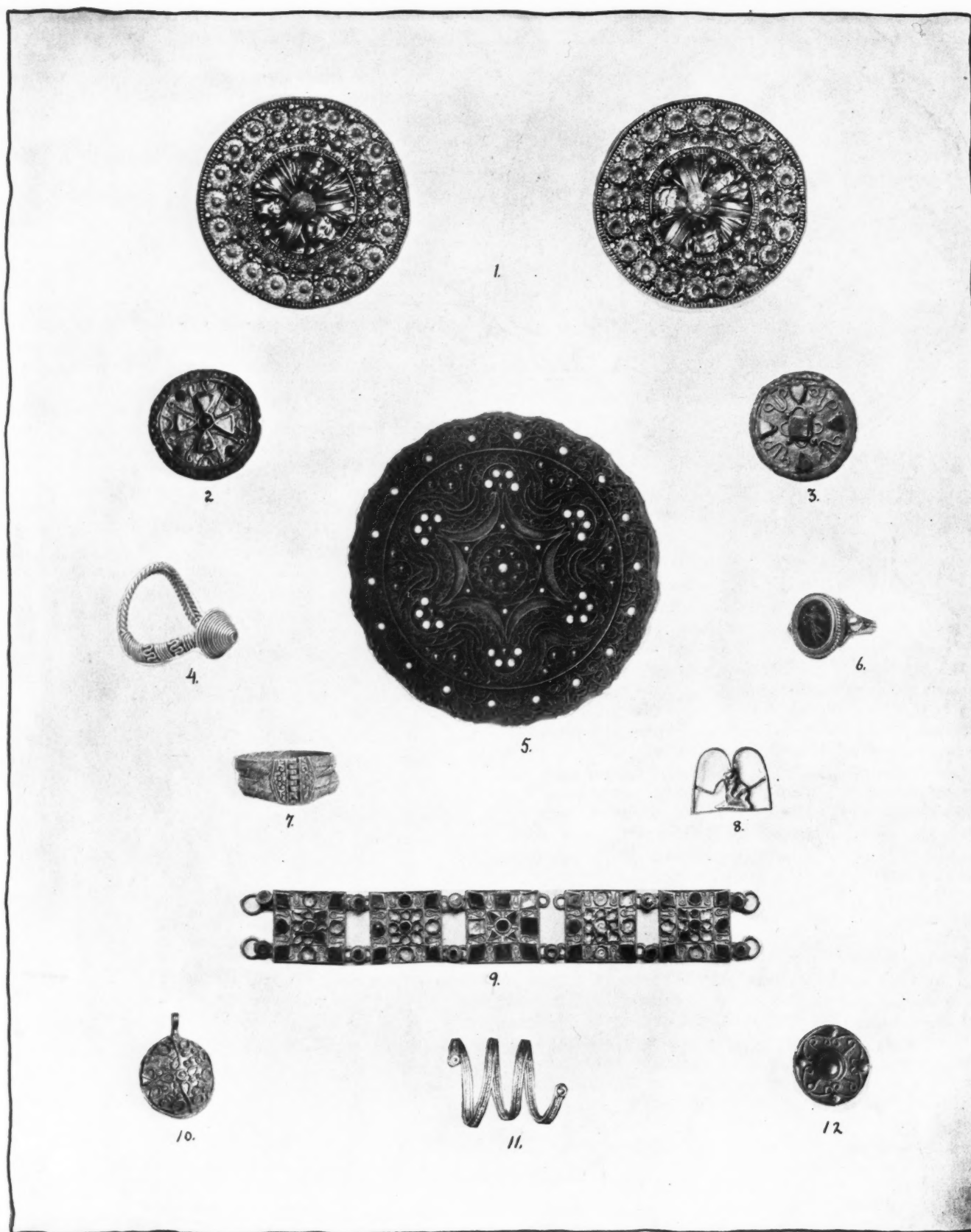
be good as e. g. the Etruscan and Grecian jewelry which has the added distinction of also being constructed well in conjunction with design. The sublimity of ancient Etruscan jewelry some of which may seem "fussy," yet delightfully so when compared with the finikin creations of to-day, has a dignity, and charm that artistically speaking, makes much of modern costly jewelry nothing more than tinsel. A great quantity of recent jewelry reflects the spirit of our era in the complexities of Life with its meaningless shimmer, and two-dimensional qualities.

It is unfortunate that people are of necessity partially compelled to think of making money and more money. Industry, money, fame, materialism, bull-markets occupy so much of people's time, that art qualities continue to be nonentities in their lives. There will, let us hope, be a realization some day that the acquisition of money which after all procures mainly luxuries, hinders one's sensitivity and spiritual growth. As regards the commercial jeweler, he thinks of the number of rings, chains, and brooches he can produce per day and his financial remuneration; while the men in shops think of efficiency in workmanship and a pay envelope. The drawings of commercial jewelry designers are rendered painstakingly, but usually are minus art qualities. Compare the illustrations with the displays of jewelry stores. If a designer should create a design having art quality, it is given to many men, each worker contributing his specialty toward its execution in metal. Jewelry that is both designed and made by a good craftsman is greatly superior to the finest commercial creation. Captains of industry think of utility, the practical, supplying the demand, and giving the public what it wants. The general public, in its buying of jewelry does not respond to art qualities, for it usually supports the pot-boiler who follows the prevalent "style," and gives what is desired. The answer to the odd question, how can the public demand things that are good in design, when the shop keeper gives what is wanted, is that it should first acquire a knowledge of "Art Principles." In general both are in need of art education. Even though "Art" cannot be taught, appreciation for and ability to select the more beautiful things can be acquired by the majority. The layman can develop his appreciation, although he cannot create, through the study of the fundamental art principles that are common to most forms of art.



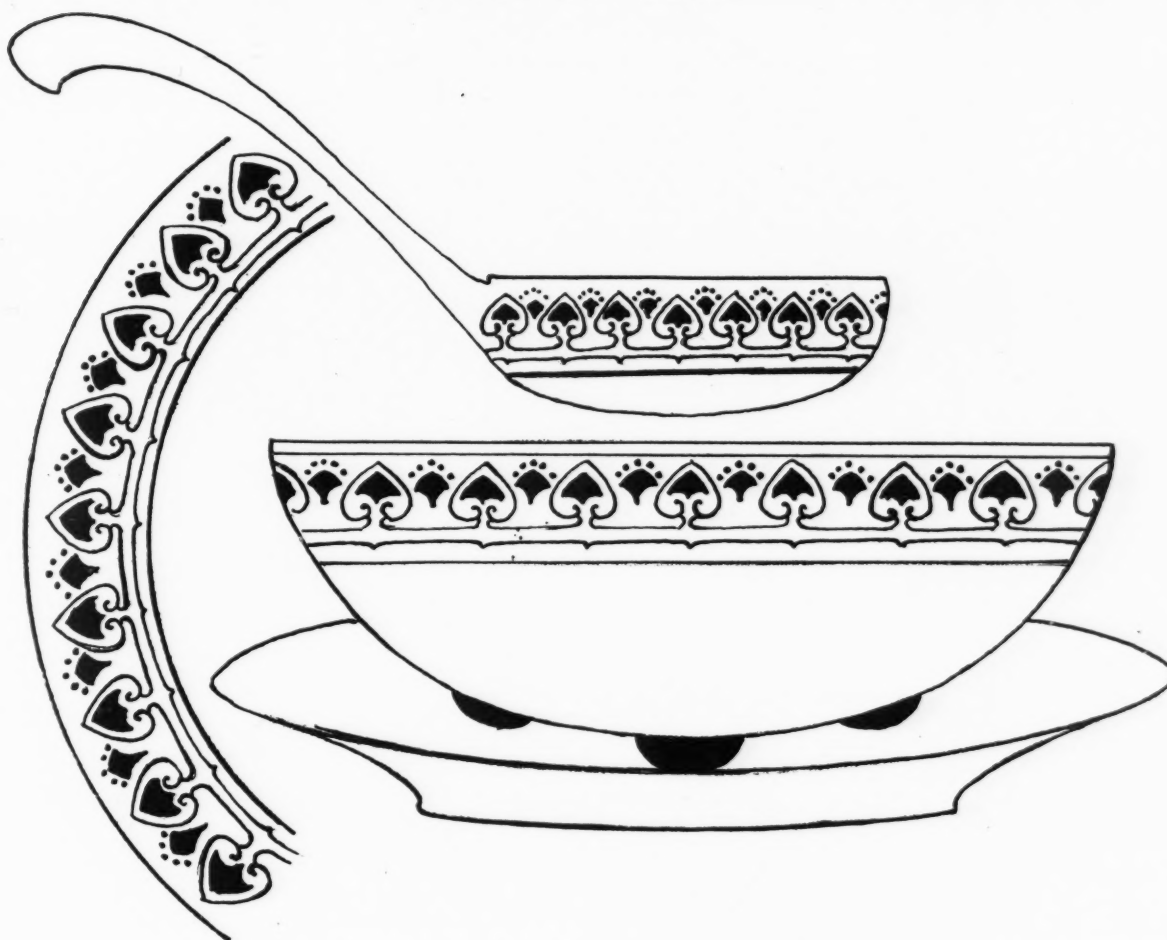
SALT SHAKER—ALICE ALLEN

To be executed in gold on opal and yellow lustre.



JEWELRY—Courtesy of Metropolitan Museum

No. 1—Etruscan, 5th or 6th century B. C. Nos. 2, 3, 6, 10 and 12—Merovingian Nos. 6 and 7—Indian, 17th-19th century No. 5—Turkish mid. 19th century No. 8—Egyptian 12th dynasty No. 9—Roman, probably 3d century A. D. No. 11—Greek



GRAVY SET IN GOLD AND SCARLET AND BLACK ENAMELS—HENRIETTA BARCLAY PAIST

BEGINNERS' CORNER

GRAVY SET IN GOLD AND SCARLET AND BLACK ENAMELS

ONE should have a separate palette knife and brushes for gold, a small steel palette knife with a blade about three inches long, a No. 2 sable brush for edges and lines and a square shader No. 4 for larger spaces. If one can use an India ink pen with gold the finest lines can be made. After lifting the cover from the gold, mix up only a small portion of the gold with a drop or two of spirits of turpentine until about the consistency of cream. Keep the gold in the point of the brush or pen. Keep the gold carefully covered when not being used.

After the gold is dried on the china the lines can be straightened with a pen knife or sharp point; or, before it is dried, after practice, with a clean brush pointed with your lips, run along the line with a steady hand and remove any unevenness.

For the enamels take a very little on a piece of ground glass and mix with medium to a thick cream, then thin with spirits of turpentine to a thin cream. Take the enamel up on the point of the brush, as much as you conveniently can if the space is large, and float it on the space to be covered. By floating is meant to lay the flat of the brush on the ware, withdrawing it while at the same time spreading it evenly and rather thinly over the surface without showing brush marks. If more than one brush full is needed, start back a way on the already laid enamel, so that there will be no thin and thick spots. Keep the upper part of the brush free of enamels.

Choose the softer wares for enamel work if you wish to avoid the risk of chipping. The hard French china is most difficult for beginners to manage. Satsuma, Sedji or Belleek will be easier to handle.

ENAMELED BOX COVER (page 118)

Elise Johann

Rose basket—Black parts of design in Black enamel. Basket in Mauve. White roses in pale Mauve with Rose Pink centers. Grey roses—Deep Red Lavender with pale Mauve centers. Leaves—Slightly Greyed Cobalt Blue.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

There is no mark of enamels that is absolutely reliable on the hard foreign makes of china, but with careful firing any of the makes advertised are fairly reliable on hard china and entirely so on softer wares such as Satsuma, Belleek, etc. Write to our advertisers.

The best way to be sure about different wares you may wish to use for decoration, is to try a small piece or broken bit in your kiln. We have decorated the Ivory ware, Guernsey, common yellow and brown crockery and Sedji in the same kiln, the yellow ware being put in the coolest part of the kiln. But each decorator must judge by her own particular kiln, as kilns are as individual almost as people. The same enamels, etc., were used for all. The brown ware with a lustre did not take the enamels so well.

If gold rubs off in burnishing, it has been underfired. If the lustre has been fired, either turpentine or lavender can be used in mixing gold. Unfluxed gold is used only over color. Burnish your gold with burnishing sand and a wet piece of surgical cotton.



ENAMELED BOX COVER—ELISE JOHANN

(Treatment page 117)

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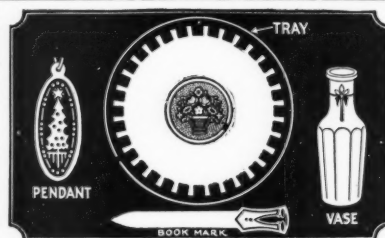
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